

Proto-Austronesian Genitive Determiners*

1. Determiners and the PAN Noun Phrase

It is a well-known fact that most Philippine languages are verb-initial, and that the NPs that follow the verb have their relationship to the verb more or less explicitly marked by a set of morphemes which have been variously called articles, case-marking particles, prepositions, etc., but which I will refer to in this paper as determiners. Ivatan (1) is a language which relies heavily on determiners to mark such relations, whereas Ilokano (2) utilizes word order and other devices more extensively.

(1) **Ivatan** (Reid 1966)

mangamu?mu ʔu taqu su mutdeh nu buday du vahay
frighten NOM man ACC child INS snake LOC house
'The man is frightening the child with a snake in the house.'

(2) **Ilokano**

butbutngen ti táu ti ubing iti úleg iti balay
frighten NOM man ACC child INS snake LOC house
'The man is frightening the child with a snake in the house.'

Determiners not only signal the case relation of the NP which they (generally) introduce, but they usually also indicate whether the head noun is personal or common, whether it is singular or plural, and not infrequently such other information as the definiteness or specificity of the head noun as well as its temporal or spatial relation to the speaker. These features result in considerable complexity in the determiner systems of many languages, and complicate the task of reconstruction. No two languages exhibit precisely the same set, and often closely related languages vary considerably in the forms they use.

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In earlier papers (Reid 1978 and 1979), I have attempted to account for the development of the Nominative determiners by appealing to a variety of diachronic processes which operated within the structural framework given in (3).

(3) Determiner (Plural) Head (Ligature Attribute)

The HEAD could be a noun (possessed or not), a demonstrative noun (i.e., this one, that one, etc.), an adjective, or a verb with or without its nominal complements. In any case, the head was always interpreted nominally. In other words, the head was always either an underived or a derived noun with or without complements. The ATTRIBUTE could likewise be a noun, a demonstrative, an adjective, or a verbal construction, but in any case it was always interpreted as a relative clause, as in (4).

(4) **Ilokano**

- a. ti ásu a dakkél
DET dog LIG big
'the big dog (literally, the dog which is big)'
- b. ti dakkél nga ásu
DET big LIG dog
'the big dog (literally, the big one which is a dog)'
- c. ti daytoy nga immay
DET this LIG came
'this one who came (literally, the this one who came)'
- d. ti immay a daytoy
DET came LIG this
'this one who came (literally, the one who came who is the one)'

The kinds of processes which appear to be primarily responsible for the variety of forms now appearing, include loss of the nominative determiner (unmarking of Subject), and demonstrative to determiner shift, with the Ligature, formerly joining a head and an attribute, now appearing in fossilized form as a nasal on the end of the determiner. Various other processes—some analogical, some phonological—have also played a part in creating the welter of forms that we now find.¹

¹ When I proposed in Reid 1978 that the Tagalog Nominative determiner *ang* developed from a sequence of *i (Nominative determiner), *na (demonstrative), and *=ng (ligature), no language had yet come to my attention in which just such a sequence actually occurred. It appears, however, from the following data (appearing in Wolfenden 1971:131) that *inang*

2. Determiners and the Genitive Noun Phrase

The genitive NP in Proto-Philippines, as well as in Proto-Austronesian, was of the same general structure as the NP characterized as (3). As a complement in a verbal clause it generally appeared immediately after the verb, and acted as agent (non-subject) of the verb. The preferred word order in most Philippine languages is Verb-Agent-Patient, regardless of which of the complements is subject. In some Philippine languages (such as Tagalog), the genitive NP also functions to mark indefinite Patients. Whether it had this function in Proto-Philippines is still a matter which needs investigation. The evidence is not clear.

Within an NP, the genitive NP conveyed those meanings which we generally characterize as possessive, but which also include part-whole and similar semantic relations.

The diversity mentioned above which is found in the forms of the nominative determiner, is also found in the forms of the genitive determiner.

Various attempts at reconstruction of PAN genitive determiners have appeared. *ni has been reconstructed by Brandstetter (1916), Dempwolff (1938), Dyen (1949), and Blust (1972). It has also been reconstructed for Proto-Eastern Oceanic by Cashmore (1969) and for Proto-Oceanic by Pawley (1973).

Blust (1974) reconstructed a genitive phrase for PAN of the shape: Noun *ni Noun, on the basis of a number of comparisons between Toba Batak (TB) and Fijian (FIJ) of the type displayed in (5).

- (5) a. **TB** mata ni angin
 FIJ mata ni cangin
 PAN *maCa ni angin
 'direction of the wind'
- b. **TB** aek ni mata
 FIJ wai ni mata

still occurs in Hiligaynon as a Nominative determiner with demonstrative force, thus confirming the reconstruction.

Hiligaynon (Wolfenden 1971:131)

Panglutuan sang kan-on sang baboy ina = ng kaldero

will.cook.in of.the food of.the pig that = LIG pot

'I will cook some pig's food in that pot.'

PAN *waSiR ni maCa
 ‘tear of the eye’

On the basis of widely occurring forms in Eastern Oceanic, Pawley also proposed a Proto-Oceanic *na where a ‘dominant’ relation existed between the possessor and the possessed noun, *ka where the possessed noun was edible, and a zero marker for objects which were inalienably possessed.

Noting from the Philippine evidence that *ni* is primarily used to mark genitive NPs in which the head noun is personal, and that there are a number of languages in widely dispersed subgroups in the Philippines that mark a common genitive NP with *na*, I proposed in Pawley and Reid (1979) that *na and *ni were respectively PAN common and personal genitive determiners. Further support for this position came from Formosan languages where Atayal and Paiwan, representing respectively the Northern and Southern subgroups, show *na* as the common genitive determiner, and several members of the Southern group use *ni* exclusively as the personal genitive determiner. I assumed that such languages as Toba Batak and Fijian had extended the functions of the personal *ni* to include common genitive nouns.

3. Phonological Alternation of Genitive Determiners

Related to the problem of determining the structure of the genitive NP and the forms of the genitive determiner was the reconstruction of genitive pronouns for PAN, a task which Dempwolff (1938), Dahl (1976), and Dyen (1974) have all attempted. The most recent attempt, by Blust (1977), takes note of synchronic variation in the forms of the genitive pronouns in a number of Western Austronesian languages such as (6).

(6)	Javanese	-e	3s	(following consonant-final stems)
		-ne	3s	(following vowel-final stems)
	Proto-Ambonese	-i	3s	(following consonant final stems)
		-ni	3s	(following vowel-final stems)

Alternation of the same kind, with nasal-initial genitive pronouns occurring after vowels, is found also in Maranao in the Philippines as in (7).

(7)	Maranao (McKaughan 1959)		
	-ka,	-ngka	2s
	-ian,	-nian	3s
	-io,	-nio	2p

Blust also noted that there was evidence from a number of languages, such as (8) and (9), that there was a PAN Genitive determiner **i*, which had not previously been reconstructed.

(8) **Bugoto, Solomon Islands** (Ivens 1940)

a. na huu i aho
the sinking of sun
'sunset'

b. dathe i botho
child of pig
'piglet'

(9) **Raluana** (Lanyan-Orgill 1962)

a lima iTo Uralulu
the hand of Uralulu
'Uralulu's hand'

To these data could be added Philippine evidence from Gaddang, Itawis, Subanon, Sarangani Manobo, and Maranao, where *i*, rather than *ni*, appears as a personal genitive determiner, and from Pangasinan and various Meso-Philippine languages, where reflexes of PAN **i* appear either as an alternant, or as an initial formative on common genitive determiners.

Blust proposed on the basis of his evidence that PAN genitive pronouns should be reconstructed as in (10).

(10)	Singular	Plural
1	i-ku/ni-ku	1IN i-ta /ni-ta
		1EX i-mi/ni-mi
2	i-Su/ni-Su	2 i-mu/ni-mu
3	i-a/ni-a	3 i-Da/ni-Da

He proposed that the first of each pair was the alternant which followed consonant-final stems, with the second of each pair following vowel-final stems.

Now, although Blust postulated **i* and **ni* as phonologically conditioned alternants for the PAN genitive determiner when it formed a part of the genitive pronoun, he did not propose that such alternation actually existed when full NPs were involved. The Central Cordilleran languages of the Philippines, however, provide us with the evidence that such was probably the case. Bontok is representative of these languages. Alternation exists, depending on whether the

final segment of the possessed noun is a vowel or a consonant. Notice in (11) that alternation exists whether the possessor is a common or a personal noun.

(11) **Bontok**

- a. ʔa:su-n nan lala:ki
dog GEN man
'man's dog'
- b. ʔa:su -n Juan
dog GEN John
'John's dog'
- c. manuk nan lala:ki
chicken GEN man
'man's chicken'
- d. manuk Juan
chicken John
'John's chicken'

Given the evidence from the pronominal system and what we already know about the structure of the PAN noun phrase, it would seem that Bontok reflects a Genitive NP such as (12), with loss of the high front vowel from the Determiner.

- (12)
- | DET | Head | LIG | ATT | |
|-----|--------|-----|----------|-----------------------------|
| *ni | N.DEM | =ng | N.common | (after vowels) ² |
| *i | N.DEM | =ng | N.common | (after consonants) |
| *ni | N.PERS | | | (after vowels) |
| *i | N.PERS | | | (after consonants) |

It now appears that my reconstruction of the genitive that appeared in Pawley and Reid (1979) must be modified to account for the data above. Blust's (1974) reconstructions must also be modified to something like the following (13).

- (13)
- | | | | |
|--------|----|-------|-------------------------|
| *maCa | ni | angin | 'direction of the wind' |
| *waSiR | i | maCa | 'tear of the eye' |

Moreover, as we saw in (12), if the possessor noun was definite it was probably preceded by a demonstrative such as *na.

² Although *=ng appears here as a ligature, the appearance of a velar nasal in this position probably did not predate the development of Proto-Malayo-Polynesian. There is no evidence from the Formosan languages that a velar nasal occurred with this function in Proto-Austronesian. The PAN ligature was probably *=a.

The fact that *ni* most commonly appears in Philippine languages as the personal genitive determiner is simply explained by the fact that such NPs did not generally allow demonstratives which could have preempted the determiner position. Moreover, the personal nominative determiner *si* gave analogical support to the genitive *ni*.

4. The Source of Genitive *nu

Although postulating reconstructions such as *ni (na) alternating with *i (na) allows us to explain much of the diversity currently found in the determiners of the Austronesian languages, there is one genitive determiner found throughout the family that has yet to be explained, and which has not yet been reconstructed for Proto-Austronesian. The form in question is *nu. Reflexes of this form as a genitive determiner are found in a number of Formosan languages such as Tsou, Saisiyat, and Paiwan. In Amis it occurs as a genitive determiner before common nouns which are not spatially oriented and is replaced by a reflex of the form reconstructed in (12) when the possessed noun is spatially oriented. *Nina* occurs as the Amis genitive determiner when the possessed noun is proximate, *niya* occurs when it is non-proximate, and *nira* occurs when the possessed noun is remote. The determiner for personal genitive nouns in Amis is *ni*.

Reflexes of *nu also occur in Philippine languages such as Ivatan, Ilongot, Yogad, Umiray Dumaget, and Subanon. In Casiguran Dumaget, the reflex is *no*, and occurs alongside *na*. Headland and Headland (1974) distinguishes between these two genitive common noun determiners in Casiguran Dumaget. He says that *na* marks genitive nouns that are alive, known, general, actual, in sight or present in time, whereas *no* marks genitive nouns that are dead, unknown, specific, non-actual, out-of-sight, past in time and singular.

Other western Austronesian languages such as Murut, Chamorro and Toba Batak also have a reflex of *nu as a genitive determiner. A form *no* occurs widely as a possessive particle in Oceanic languages and was reconstructed by Pawley (1972) for Proto-Eastern Oceanic as well as for Proto-Oceanic. In his more recent 'Proto-Oceanic Grammar', however, he states that *no* developed in Proto-Oceanic as a phonologically conditioned variant of *na* (preceding pro-

nouns containing high back vowels) which later became generalized. Nevertheless the possibility remains that POC *no developed from a PAN *nu.

The function of *ni in PAN seems clear, *na likewise can be explained. But what was the function of *nu? A comparison of independent genitive pronouns marking absolute possession (forms meaning ‘mine’, ‘yours’, etc.), occurring predicatively or as sentence topics in a number of languages in Formosa, the Philippines and in Indonesia, imply that in PAN such forms were constructed on the pattern given in (14).

(14) *nu + Genitive pronoun

The reconstruction of PAN *nu ‘thing’ (cf. Dempwolff’s *anu and Dahl’s *an₁u ‘somebody, something’), seems well supported by the following Formosan evidence (Ferrell 1969), where the prefixal elements reflect either reconstructible determiners, or determiners actually occurring in the respective languages.

(15)	Squliq Atayal	na-nu?	‘what’
		i-nu	‘where’
	Sediq	ma-nu?	‘what’
		?i-nu?	‘where’
		ka-nu-wan	‘when’
	Favorlang	nu-mma	‘what’
	Thao	nu:-ma	‘what’
	Saisiyat	ka-no?	‘what’
		hay-no?	‘where’
		?i-no-wan	‘when (future)’

The appearance of *nu* followed by a genitive pronoun to mean absolute possession, therefore, seems very reasonable. Comparison of the two genitive paradigms in Amis (16a and 16b) provides further support for the reconstruction.

(16) Amis (Chen 1981)

Genitive Pronouns

a.		b.	
1s	nomako	1s	(n)ako
2s	nomiso	2s	(n)iso
3s	nira	3s	nira
1EX	noniam	1EX	niam
1IN	nomita	1IN	(n)ita
2P	namo	2P	(n)amo
3S	nohni	3P	(n)ohni

In Amis, the long genitive pronouns (16a) occur as predicate of an equational sentence (17a), or as a sentence topic (17b). They may also follow a noun, as part of a possessed NP, a function to which the short Genitive pronouns (16b) are restricted (17c and d).

- (17) a. o nomako kina waco
 DET mine NOM dog
 'The dog is mine.'
- b. nomako iri, itini
 mine TOP here
 'As for mine, it is here.'
- c. waco nomako
 dog mine
 'my dog'
- d. waco nako
 dog my
 'my dog'

Since *nu was vowel final, genitive pronouns which followed would have been preceded by *ni rather than *i. This situation is reflected unambiguously in the first person exclusive plural form *no-ni-am*. The appearance of a medial *m* in the first and second singular and first inclusive plural pronouns is probably a result of nasal dissimilation, a process which was blocked in the first exclusive form by the final bilabial nasal.

It is probable that PAN *nu not only occurred as head of a possessed NP, with a pronominal possessor, but could also be followed by a Genitive NP ('thing of the man', etc.). Subsequent changes brought about a shift from noun to determiner, resulting in *nu becoming a genitive determiner. This is precisely

the same type of change as that which resulted in the change of *na, a PAN demonstrative noun, to a determiner in so many of the daughter languages.

The forms cited by Blust (1977:12), such as Kayan *anu-k* ‘mine’, Samal *anu-ku* ‘mine’, etc., reflect this reconstruction with loss of the Genitive *ni as well as other innovative developments. Similar innovations have taken place in the Cordilleran languages of the Northern Philippines which, like Ilokano, form absolute possessive pronouns by adding their post-clitic genitive pronouns to a reflex of *kua ‘thing’ or *bagi ‘body’.

One of the implications of the reconstruction of *nu as part of an absolute possessive pronoun paradigm in PAN, is that the assigning of an absolute possessive meaning to PAN *akən, *amən, and *itən (as has been done by Blust 1977:12) is incorrect. These forms were probably pronominal formatives occurring predicatively (witness the *-ən), and developed possessive meaning originally by becoming attached to the Genitive determiner, either *ni or *i as in (18).

- (18) **Pazeh** ni-akən
 Yami y-akən

Thus, languages such as Tagalog, which use these formative as absolute possessives without a preceding genitive determiner, are assumed to have lost the determiner.

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